

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 6-43 are currently pending in the present application, with claims 1, 16, and 29-30 being written in independent form. Claims 1, 6, 16, 18, 29-30, and 32 have been amended for clarity. In particular, independent claims 1, 16, and 29-30 have been amended to include the subject matter of claim 5. As a result, claim 5 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the amendments may also be found, for instance, in par. [0030] of the published application (US 2006/0021548). Thus, no new matter has been introduced into the claims.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (Ito)

Claims 1, 7, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) or (e) as being anticipated by US 6,992,431 (Ito). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons below.

“A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.”¹

As noted above, claims 1 and 16 have been amended to include the subject matter of claim 5. As evidenced by the present rejection, Ito fails to disclose or suggest the subject matter of claim 5.

For at least the reasons above, there can be no anticipation with regard to claims 1 and 16. Consequently, there can be no anticipation with regard to claim 7, at least by virtue of its dependency on claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the above rejection.

¹ *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (Stuebbe)

Claims 1, 3, 16-17, and 37-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2000-007936 (Stuebbe). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons below.

As noted above, claims 1 and 16 have been amended to include the subject matter of claim 5. As evidenced by the present rejection, Stuebbe fails to disclose or suggest the subject matter of claim 5.

For at least the reasons above, there can be no anticipation with regard to claims 1 and 16. Consequently, there can also be no anticipation with regard to claims 3, 37 and claims 17, 38, at least by virtue of their dependency on claims 1 and 16, respectively. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the above rejection.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (Kawamoto)

Claims 1-43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 6,632,274 (Kawamoto). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons below.

Without conceding as to any of the Examiner's assertions that are not specifically addressed herein, Applicants note that Kawamoto fails, as a preliminary matter, to disclose or suggest adjusting surface charges of the conductive nanoparticles with an acid, wherein "the acid includes an organic acid, an inorganic acid, or a polymeric acid, the organic acid including an acetic acid or a glacial acetic acid, and the **inorganic** acid including a hydrochloric acid, a nitric acid, a phosphoric acid, or a sulfuric acid," as recited by amended claims 1, 16, and 29-30.

Although Kawamoto discloses "a plasticizer of a phosphoric acid type," assuming *arguendo* that the plasticizer of Kawamoto can even be used to adjust surface charges of conductive nanoparticles, the "phosphoric type plasticizer" taught by Kawamoto is organic (as opposed to **inorganic**).²

For at least the reasons above, a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established with regard to claims 1, 16, and 29-30. Consequently, a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established with regard to claims 2-15, 37, claims 17-28, 38-41, claim 42, and claims 31-36, 43, at least by virtue of their dependency on claims 1, 16, 29, and 30, respectively. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the above rejection.

² Kawamoto: col. 5, ln. 3-5 and 17-20.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to allow all of the pending claims in the present application.

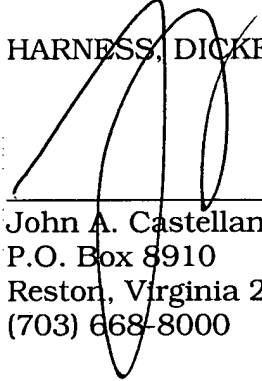
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. §1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By



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